

What is Claimed is:

1. A method of aligning an optical fiber with an optical device, the fiber having a longitudinal axis and an end surface proximate to the device, said method comprising the step of rotating the optical fiber about a first axis, said first axis being co-linear with the longitudinal axis of said optical fiber.
2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of rotating the optical fiber about a second axis, said second axis and said first axis intersecting at the center of said end surface.
3. The method of Claim 2, further comprising the step of rotating the optical fiber about a third axis, said third axis, said second axis and said first axis intersecting at the center of said end surface.
4. A method of aligning an optical fiber with an optical device, the fiber having an end surface proximate to the device, said method comprising the steps of
  - a) rotating the optical fiber about a first axis;
  - b) rotating the optical fiber about a second axis; and
  - c) rotating the optical fiber about a third axis; wherein said first axis, said second axis and said third axis intersect at the center of said end surface.

2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

5. A method of connecting a first optical device with a first housing to a second optical device with a second housing, the method comprising the steps of:  
providing a strip of solder about an end portion of the first housing;  
inserting an end portion of the second housing into the end portion of the first housing;  
surrounding the first and second housings with at least one air nozzle;  
directing hot air into said at least one air nozzle such that the solder flows about the end portions of both housings;  
allowing the solder to cool and solidify, thereby connecting the two housings.
6. The method of claim 5 wherein the at least one air nozzle is a one-piece nozzle having a central opening, and said step of surrounding comprises positioning the housings within the central opening.
7. The method of claim 5 wherein the at least one air nozzle is a two piece nozzle, and said step of surrounding comprises bringing the two pieces of the nozzle together about the two housings.
8. The method of claim 5 wherein the step of allowing the solder to cool comprises directing cool air into the at least one air nozzle, to thereby rapidly cool the solder.
9. The method of claim 5 wherein the step of allowing the solder to cool comprises directing air of progressively cooler temperatures into the at least one air nozzle, to thereby allow the solder to cool in a controlled manner.